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# OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE

## NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION:

I have received a communication from the National Research Council stating that a Division of Anthropology and Psychology has been created in that organization and that the Anthropological Association is invited to select a number of delegates to participate in the final organization of the Division of Anthropology and Psychology. It seems advisable to have a special meeting of the Council to consider this proposal and to make the selection of delegates. I am therefore considering the calling of a Council meeting early in October, notice of which will be sent you in due time. In the meantime, I should be glad to have you consider the proposed plan, the outline of which is as follows:

As a detail in the administration of the Division, a secretary will be employed to act for the division as a whole. This officer must reside in Washington.

1. The membership of the Division shall be equally divided between psychology and anthropology, and for the present shall be limited to nine members representing psychology and nine representing anthropology.

2. The leading organization in each of the two subjects represented shall be asked to nominate six representatives for membership in the Division, the six persons thus nominated, in conference with the Executive Board of the Research Council to nominate the remaining three for each subject. It is understood that the American Psychological Association will nominate the six members for psychology, and the American Anthropological Association the six members for anthropology.

3. The eighteen members selected shall elect from their number a Chairman for the Division of Anthropology and Psychology, and the nine representatives of each subject shall elect a chairman for a section to be organized for each subject.

4. For the present the work of the Division shall be divided so that general matters will be cared for by the whole Division under the direction of the Chairman of the Division, the sections holding rather frequent meetings under the direction of the Section Chairman.

The general plan for the organization of the National Research Council was published in *Science*, May 16, 1919. This will give an idea of the organization as a whole in which our Division is to function.

CLARK WISSLER,  
*President*

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION:

We have been invited to select six delegates to the proposed section of the National Research Council dealing with anthropology and psychology. The original request of the Research Council was that we call a special meeting to pass on the proposal and to select delegates, but it has proven impossible to have such a meeting this summer nor is there reason to believe that a sufficient number of members could be assembled, before the annual meeting. In view of these difficulties it has been proposed that a mail vote be taken. While there is no authority for such a procedure it seems the only solution. Will you not, therefore, register your vote and so pledge yourself to vote for the approval of this action at the next annual meeting. Please vote upon the following:

1. Do you favor participation in the organization of the National Research Council?

2. The Executive Committee has nominated twelve candidates for the six places upon the Sectional Committee of the National Research Council. Please make up a ballot containing these twelve names, or others, in order of your preference. The six receiving the greatest number of votes will be declared elected.

A prompt return to the undersigned is desired.

CLARK WISSLER,  
*President*

NEW YORK CITY,  
September 2, 1919

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATING BALLOT

Boas	Wissler	Goddard	Lowie
Fewkes	Laufer	Swanton	Hooton
Kroeber	Dixon	Tozzer	MacCurdy

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION:

The canvass of the mail vote of the Council has been completed. The President appointed a committee consisting of B. T. B. Hyde, George H. Pepper, and Louis R. Sullivan to canvass the vote. They report as follows:

*Dear Dr. Wissler:*

Herewith you will find a report of the committee appointed by you to canvass the ballots of the Council of the American Anthropological Association for

six members in the National Research Council. The total number of votes cast was forty-eight. Question A: Yes, 40; No, 2; non-voting, 6. Question B: the following have a majority vote for their respective positions.

1. Boas
2. Wissler

3. Kroeber
4. Laufer

5. Fewkes
6. Dixon

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) B. T. B. HYDE  
GEO. H. PEPPER  
L. R. SULLIVAN

Very truly yours,

CLARK WISSLER,  
*President.*

NEW YORK CITY,  
September 17, 1919

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION:

By authorization of the Executive Committee, acting upon the choice of the Council as indicated by the report of the special committee to canvass the ballots of the Council, I declare the following members of our Association elected as delegates to the National Research Council, Section of Anthropology and Psychology: Franz Boas, Roland B. Dixon, J. Walter Fewkes, A. L. Kroeber, Berthold Laufer, Clark Wissler.

CLARK WISSLER,  
*President*

NEW YORK CITY,  
September 24, 1919

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 20, 1919.

*Dear Professor Holmes:*

Since you have circulated among the Council of our Association a number of communications protesting against the result of the trial ballot of the Executive Committee, I hope you will permit me to reply in the same open manner.

First, allow me to call attention to the clause in our Constitution defining the status, powers, and duties of the Executive Committee. It is clearly stated that this Committee shall "act in behalf of the Association, except during the meetings of the Association or of the Council, in all matters requiring attention." (The members are elected and not appointed by the President.) There can be no question as to the right of the Committee to itself name the delegates, if it chose to

assume that responsibility. What it did, was to refer the result of its preliminary ballot to the Council with a call for a vote.

However, you have not questioned the authority of the Committee, but in your letter of September third, raise two points of objection to the method adopted by it: (a) that the trial vote of the Executive Committee "cannot but interfere by suggestion with the unbiased selection that is the right of each member of the Council"; (b) "further, it does not appear that members of the Executive Committee, having expressed preferences, may not have as individuals the supplementary privilege of enforcing the selection."

The first objection (a) seemingly applies to any ballot or list of names presented to a voter, but the point here is, would the presentation of the Committee's list lead the members of *our* Council to vote against their convictions? That it would influence them to that extent is to me unthinkable.

As to (b), I do not follow you. The members of the Committee are members of the Council and so cannot be denied a vote at any election. As a rule, members of a nominating committee do not lose their right to vote by virtue of having expressed a preference.

As I see it, both the preceding objections would apply to any election in which a committee suggested names for consideration and are, therefore, objections to the accepted way of doing things. However, in your letter of September fourth you raise an entirely different point, *viz.*: "I wish to express a doubt that the Executive Committee fully polled would authorize such a palpable slight to the National Museum."

As to "fully polled," I can answer definitely; two-thirds of the Committee voted; their vote was decisive. Action upon this vote was warranted by custom.

Now as to the question of the National Museum; the fundamental point here is, as to whether *institutions* are to be represented in the divisions of the National Research Council. My understanding and that of the Committee is, that the principle of institutional representation was considered in the formation of the National Research Council, but rejected as impractical. Hence, it was our duty to consider research men only, regardless of their institutional and geographical antecedents. Institutional representation would call for no action by the Association; at least there would be no voting for delegates, since an individual would be a member of the division solely by virtue of his institutional status. I can assure you, therefore, that your interpretation of the ballot as a discrimination against the National Museum, and such other institu-

tions as did not find names of their officers upon the list, came as a surprise to the Committee. Further, we were pained to read the word "slight" in your letter. That is an ugly word and needs no definition to an American. I regret that you apply it to the members of the Committee as well as to me. I assure you that no member of the Committee had the least thought of "slighting" any person or museum.

Again, you may recall that you wrote me June twenty-third, stating that you could not think of taking the part of a delegate for reasons of health. The Committee had opportunity to know this and doubtless, like myself, accepted your decision with regret. I am sure that the Committee would have been glad to vote for you, had you left them free to do so. The one great sorrow this misunderstanding brings to us, is that you should be made unhappy at a time when the rewards and joys of a great and distinguished career should be yours. Yet, since you raised these questions, we had no choice but to proceed with their discussion. Please accept, therefore, this expression of our good will and our regret that you should have misinterpreted our actions.

Believe me,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) CLARK WISSLER

PROF. W. H. HOLMES,  
U. S. National Museum,  
Washington, D. C.